

Wednesday - July 5, 1995 - 4:00 p.m.

Room 209 - Council Conference Room

CONTINUATION OF Tuesday, June 27, 1995, City Council Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Chris Peterson; Councilwoman Barbara Field, Councilman Gary McClure, Councilwoman Leni Sitnick, Councilman Joseph Carr Swicegood and Councilman Herbert J. Watts; City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

Mayor Martin announced that this is a continuation of the Tuesday, June 27, 1995, City Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION NO. 95-109 - RESOLUTION ACCEPTING FUNDING FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CRIME CONTROL AND PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNOR'S CRIME COMMISSION, TO SUPPORT A HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CITY OF ASHEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES AND TO AUTHORIZE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE MEDIATION CENTER TO CONDUCT THE TRAINING

City Manager Westbrook said that the Asheville Police Department has been awarded \$20,500, through a North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Governor's Crime Commission, to fund a Human Relations Training Program. No matching funds are required.

Councilwoman Field moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 95-109. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sitnick and carried unanimously.

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RESOLUTION NO. 95-110 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO REIMBURSE THE CITY FOR COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Police Chief Will Annarino said that the Asheville Police Department has an Asheville Residents and Government in a Unified Strategy team (ARGUS). ARGUS is staffed with one police sergeant and three police officers who provide extra protective services within Asheville's public housing communities. The Housing Authority reimburses the City for salary and fringe benefits of the three officers. The current year's cost is approximately \$105,000. The Housing Authority's funding source is a Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination grant. HUD requires a written agreement between the Housing Authority and the City for grant funds to be used for this purpose.

Chief Annarino answered various questions from Council about how the program has been working since 1991. He stated that drug trafficking will be reduced with the closing of Erskine Street and making it into a cul-de-sac. He explained that the Police Department is not only making arrests, but trying to change barriers, attitudes and physical boundaries. He talked about how the Police Department is begin able to help the Housing Authority with evictions, especially from lease violations. He spoke about some future grants to help with the problems in the Eagle/Market Street area and the need for merchants to be part of -2-

the solution. He said the Police Department is limited if the community is not involved and they encourage information and ideas from the public.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that she has received letters and phone calls regarding the Housing Authority not being cooperative when complaints are filed, sometimes even by resident managers. She wondered if it would be beneficial for Council to meet with the Police Chief, police employees and Housing Authority personnel to show that the City Council is determined to make the situation better in public housing, and other areas, and that the Council is committed to the elimination of the drug problem in Asheville.

When asked what the City Council could do to help the Police Department in reducing crime, it was suggested that a letter be written to our local delegation asking them to strengthen the judicial system which will enable judges to impose stricter penalties on violators.

City Council stressed that they are very serious on eliminating crime in Asheville and will do whatever they can to make Asheville crime and drug free.

Councilman McClure suggested license numbers be documented and placed on a list from the people who are buying the drugs, not only the sellers.

Mr. H. K. Edgerton stressed that City Council needs to find ways to tap the creativity of African-Americans in the community and bring them into the whole process.

Councilwoman Sitnick moved to have a letter written from the Mayor and Council to our local delegation saying that City Council is serious about the drug problems in Asheville. In that letter we should express our concerns and let me know that we intend to gather all of the players, i.e., Housing Authority management including resident managers, Police Department personnel, and local experts to hold a brainstorming session, in order to come out with some very clear, stringent objectives and goals as to how we are going to take back our City and turn it around. We are also going to investigate looking into the responsibility of parents. We want our legislators to approach the court system about more stringent measures and report back to us as quickly as possible. This motion was seconded by Councilman Swicegood and carried unanimously.

Councilman Swicegood moved for the adoption of Resolution No. 95-110. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Field and carried unanimously.

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STEERING COMMITTEE - VISIONING PROCESS

Councilman McClure reported that the Steering Committee has made considerable effort to include a more diverse group of people to its Steering Committee as requested by City Council. The Steering Committee now consists of Ray Bailey, James Banks, Carl Bartlett, Robert Burgin, Philip Carson, John Cecil, Rev. Ralph Sexton, Ben Slosman, Patricia Smith, Robert Smith, Albert Sneed, Carolyn Wallace, Betty Donoho, Ernest Ferguson, Jay Garner, Wanda Greene, Patsy Keever, Dolly Mullen, Clark Olsen and Theo Pritchett. He stated that City Council needs to make sure that the Steering Committee is very diverse in appointments to the

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Task Force. He also stated that the Steering Committee, at City Council's request, delayed in making the Task Force appointments for an additional week. He supported moving forward with the City's participation.

Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern with the whole process. She stressed the

need for real meaningful public input. She had concerns about the Steering Committee itself making appointments, when additional appointments should have been made by the original four groups that participated financially. She had no problem with the people the Steering Committee appointed, only with the process. Personally she has a real problem with the way things have happened so far, but the City would be missing an opportunity if they didn't support it and if they weren't involved, even if only to monitor it and see if our \$5,000 was well spent. She didn't feel that we should take ourselves out of it at this point, but she was not happy with the way it happened. Part of what our challenge, as a Council, is to convince the community that this is a good thing and they should participate.

Vice-Mayor Peterson felt that the Committee did not include enough diversity and would not support the City's involvement in the progress.

Councilwoman Sitnick noted that instead of the 150 member Task Force, a decision has been made to include 37 elected officials (including all City Council and all County Commissioners) over and above the 150 members.

Councilman Swicegood stated he didn't appreciate Albert Sneed's comments in the Citizen-Times relative to his controlling Council. He didn't know if this process was going to be any good, but he would support it in hopes that it can make Asheville better and hoped that something good will come out of it.

Mayor Martin stated that the process at the start was flawed, but we must keep our eyes on the objectives and give this process our wholehearted support.

Councilwoman Sitnick presented Council with the names and addresses of the appointed Steering Committee members (minus the two appointments of the City) and noted the budget of \$27,500 relating to the facilitator.

Councilwoman Field stated that even though she had some problems with Mr. Luke, the City needs to put as much as it can into the process, so we can get out of it as much as we can.

Mr. Daniel Breen spoke against the City spending \$5,000 on this matter especially since it doesn't have the diversity of the City on it.

Mr. H. K. Edgerton suggested Council use the name of the people that were involved in the EZ/EC process. It was the consensus of Council that using those people would be an excellent idea.

Councilman McClure moved to follow through with the City's participation on the visioning process. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Field and carried on a 6-1 vote, with Vice-Mayor Peterson voting "no". Councilwoman Sitnick wanted it noted that she voted in favor, but with reservations.

Mr. Albert Sneed said that the newspaper article Councilman Swicegood was referring to earlier was incorrect and apologized for any misunderstanding. -4-

The following names were suggested by Council for the two appointments to the Steering Committee: Rev. O.T. Tomes, Jerry Sternberg, Rock McClure, Cissy Majebe, Jan Bowman, Dr. David Burnette, Joe Norterker, Katherine Morris, Jay Schostry, David Miles, H.K. Edgerton, Barber Melton, Dick Rice, Beth Maczka, Jan Van Laurel, Ann Cross and Sam Camp. Vice-Mayor Peterson did not wish to suggest any names.

The list of names were narrowed down to five, those being: Rev. O.T. Tomes, Cissy Majebe, Jerry Sternberg, Rock McClure and David Burnette.

The following was the results: Rock McClure - 5 votes; Jerry Sternberg - 4 votes; Rev. O.T. Tomes - 3 votes; Cissy Majebe - 1 vote; and David Burnette - 1 vote.

Councilman McClure asked that Council submit to him by Friday, July 7, 1995, 10-15 names for possible appointments to the Task Force and he would pass the information onto the Steering Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS:

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:25 p.m., Councilman Swicegood moved to go into closed session in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege. This motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Peterson and carried unanimously.

At 6:13 p.m., Councilman Swicegood moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Peterson and carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY MEETING

It was the consensus of Council to hold it's next community meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 1995, in the North Asheville Community Center. The regular worksession will begin at 2:00 p.m. in Room 623 of the City Hall Building on August 1; however, a time has not been established to begin the community meeting.

SCHOOL/PARENTS PANEL

Councilwoman Sitnick briefed the Council on the School Board's meeting at Asheville High last week. She felt the School Board should have developed a process of responding prior to holding their meeting, not after it.

It was determined that City Council would wait to see how the School Board proceeded before taking any action regarding convening a panel of concerned parents to address the Council about their concerns.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
